

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

9:00 a.m., Friday, May 17, 2019
Lee County Administration East Building
2201 Second Street, Room 118
Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-244-2220



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mick Denham at 9:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The roll was called. A quorum was present. Lee County MPO Board Members in attendance included Lee County Commissioners Frank Mann, Brian Hamman, John Manning, and Cecil Pendergrass; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers John Gunter, John Carioscia, and Dave Stokes; City of Cape Coral Mayor Joe Coviello; City of Fort Myers Councilmembers Johnny Streets Jr., Teresa Watkins-Brown, and Fred Burson; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor/MPO Board Chair Mick Denham; City of Bonita Springs Deputy Mayor Peter O'Flinn; City of Bonita Springs Councilmember Fred Forbes; and Village of Estero Vice-Mayor Katy Errington.

Others in attendance included Zachary Burch, Michael Tisch, and L. K. Nandam with FDOT; Dave Loveland, Roger Desjarlais, and Doug Meurer with Lee County; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott and Ron Gogoi; Robert Codie, Levi McCollum, and Arnold Valdez with LeeTran; Lee County IT Services; Alan Mandel with Good Wheels; Nick Batos with the Village of Estero; and a member of the public Dave Urich.

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on the Consent Agenda Items.

Agenda Item #2 - *Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the March 22, 2019 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval of the Minor Update to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan
- C. Approval of the Joint FDOT MPO Certification Statement

Commissioner John Manning made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Deputy Mayor Peter O'Flinn seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments will be Taken at Each Item

Chair Denham noted that public comments will be taken at each item.

New Business

Agenda Item #4 - *Review and Approve the Public Transportation Grant Agreement and Resolution for FTA 5305 Funding

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item to adopt Resolution 19-04 authorizing the Chair to execute the multi-year Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA) with FDOT for transit planning funding. This documentation was attached to the agenda packet. He said the grant agreement covers the conditions for receiving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5305 funds for transit planning. He noted this new agreement has an expiration date of December 31, 2020 and the amount is \$281,488. Chair Denham asked if there were any comments. There were none.

Commissioner John Manning made the motion to approve the Public Transportation Grant Agreement and Resolution. Councilmember John Gunter seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 - *Review and Approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant Agreement and Resolution

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the approval of the FY 2019/2020 Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Funds for Lee County and approve resolution 19-05, that was attached to the agenda packet, authorizing the Executive Director to execute the Agreement. He said the planning grant allocation for Lee County is \$34,351 for the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 planning grant year, which runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. He said this includes staff support to the Local Coordinating Board to implement planning services for the non-sponsored transportation disadvantaged in its service area. Chair Denham asked if there were any comments. Councilmember Fred Burson asked what the grant funds were for. Mr. Scott explained it covers staff time in support of the Transportation Disadvantaged program and support to the Local Coordinating Board.

Commissioner John Manning made the motion to approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant Agreement and Resolution. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6 - *Appointment of an MPOAC Governing Board Representative

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item to appoint an MPO voting member to replace Ms. Tracey Gore on the MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC) Governing Board. He said the appointments were done in December and the main voting member on the MPOAC Governing Board for this year is no longer on the MPO Board so we are seeking a replacement member. He added that Councilman Forbes is the current alternate voting member.

Commissioner Mann made the motion to appoint Councilmember Fred Forbes as the main MPOAC Governing Board voting member. Councilmember John Gunter seconded the motion.

Chair Denham asked if an alternate also needed to be appointed. Mr. Scott replied yes. Councilmember Fred Burson was nominated and accepted to serve as alternate.

Commissioner Mann amended his motion to include Councilmember Fred Burson as alternate. Councilmember Gunter amended his second to include Councilmember Fred Burson as alternate. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #7 - Review of the Draft FY 2019/2020 through FY 2023/2024 Transportation Improvement Plan

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the Draft FY 2019/2020 - FY 2023/2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted the final approval by the Board will be at the June 21, 2019 meeting. He said the document will be open for public review for the next thirty days. Mr. Scott commented that the TIP includes the projects in the Work Program presented by FDOT at the December meeting. He provided an overview of the TIP that included information on the addition of performance measure documentation and the transit asset management plan. He said the funding amount has remained relatively constant over the past few years. He asked if there were any comments on the draft document. Chair Denham asked if there were any surprises in the document or any items that needed to be brought to the attention of the MPO Board. Mr. Scott replied no and restated that the projects summarized by FDOT at the December meeting were included in this document. Chair Denham asked if there were any Board questions or comments. There were none.

The TIP document can be accessed at the following link:

<http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/M07a.Draft-TIP-Document.pdf>

Agenda Item #8 - Final MPOAC Legislative Update

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item to review the final MPOAC Legislative Update after the end of this year's session. He reviewed the items that passed and are headed to the Governor for final approval including texting while driving as a primary offense and the three new toll road facilities. Commissioner Mann asked about the configuration and impact these new roads would have in Southwest Florida. Mr. Scott said that further modeling studies will be done with regard to the impact and then he explained the route of the closest proposed toll road. Mr. L. K. Nandam clarified it would be Collier to Polk counties but no route has been determined yet as further

studies need to be done. He added that if the Governor signs this legislation then a task team will be created that will include members of those local governments and planning organizations that will be impacted. He mentioned that this team will then compile a recommended configurations report that will be due for completion by October 2020 with construction proposed to begin in 2022. Mr. Scott continued his presentation with information on other items that passed including autonomous vehicles without a human backup on public roads, discretionary sales tax/surtax, and micromobility devices/scooters with amendments to provide local ability to regulate. Chair Denham stated that there was no pre-emption at this point. He said that Mr. Alan Mandel with Good Wheels will elaborate on the transportation bill and its potential impacts to the TD funding. Mr. Scott added that he will continue to follow these through the Governor's office and report back on their progress. Chair Denham asked if there were any thoughts or comments. Councilmember Teresa Watkins-Brown asked if texting while walking was included in the texting while driving legislation. Mr. Scott replied no but distraction of any kind for us is an issue with relation to crashes.

Other Business

Agenda Item #9 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

Mr. David Urich with the Responsible Growth Management Coalition showed charts/slides of and commented on a Littleton/Kismet connection and linking to Burnt Store Road as well as the location of a proposed new interchange at I-75. Mr. Urich noted he also presented this information to Charlotte County since it would benefit them as well. Chair Denham asked the impact of Mr. Urich commenting to the MPO Board. Mr. Scott said these scenarios can be examined, modeled, and tested in the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan. He gave the example of the Lee County MPO and the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO modeling the best locations for a new I-75 interchange in south Charlotte or north Lee.

Agenda Item #10 - LeeTran Report

Mr. Robert Codie, Director of LeeTran gave the LeeTran report. He said season just ended with a forty one percent increase in tram ridership. He said in addition to increasing ridership, operational costs were decreased indicating operational efficiency. He said this would be a building block for next year. Mr. Codie also commented on the eighteen percent increase in ridership on Try Transit Day. He said they identified ways to improve transit services and grow while reducing costs. Chair Denham asked what had been the biggest factor in increasing ridership. Mr. Codie said it was a result of proper planning which was the product of examining ridership trends from the previous year. Chair Denham asked if there were any additional comments. There were none.

Agenda Item #11 - TD Report

Mr. Alan Mandel with Good Wheels gave the TD report. He said Medicaid transportation was doubling. He then discussed the recent funding changes that resulted in a drastic reduction of non-Medicaid trip funding for Lee County. He mentioned that the recent transportation legislation related to the three toll corridors bill could provide additional grant funding, if it is signed by the Governor. He said Good Wheels has already submitted grant applications for Lee County in anticipation of the Governor signing the legislation. Mr. Mandel added that if the Governor signs the legislation, Good Wheels will know by July 1, 2019 if they have been approved for any grant funding related to the legislation. He said until additional funding is received, approximately one third of the transportation disadvantaged (TD) trips will be reduced. Chair Denham asked which communities will be mainly impacted. Mr. Mandel replied Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and Lehigh. Mr. Mandel noted there is a hierarchy of clients served with dialysis patients receiving top priority. A discussion followed on the impact that the reduced funding will have and possible alternatives. Chair Denham asked if there was anything that the MPO Board could do in support. Mr. Mandel said support for the bill could be communicated to the Governor. Another discussion followed on LeeTran's Passport possibly absorbing the other rides and notification procedures for those passengers to be cut. Mayor Coviello asked for an itemized list of costs to support passengers in his jurisdiction. Mr. Mandel said he could provide the information for the TD program in all jurisdictions. He also mentioned that additional vehicles are on order that can assist with trip support. Chair Denham asked if this funding shortfall for Good Wheels should be brought back as a separate agenda item at a future meeting. A discussion followed on the specifics of the funding sources and the possibility of sending letters of support for the corridor bill. Mr. Nandam further explained the funding allocations related to the corridor bill. A brief discussion followed on the availability of the funding, the time frame for disbursement, and alternatives to cover the shortfall. Commissioner Hamman suggested sending letters of support to the Governor for the bill. Chair Denham asked what could be done to support Good Wheels' grant application for Lee County. Numerous MPO Board members expressed support for acting swiftly and assisting Good Wheels in achieving funding to account for the shortfall.

Mayor Joe Coviello made a motion to send a letter from the MPO Board in support of the Governor signing the corridor legislation. Commissioner Brian Hamman seconded the motion.

Mr. Mandel noted he had already submitted the grant application for funding that was included in the corridor legislation. He added that letters could also be sent to Mr. Steve Holmes with the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged in support of Good Wheels grant application. Chair Denham clarified that there would then be two letters.

Mayor Coviello modified his motion to include two letters, one to the Governor and one to Mr. Holmes. Commissioner Hamman also modified his second.

Commissioner Mann mentioned there was an environmental component to the corridor legislation that should be considered. Commissioner Hamman clarified that the letter of support would be for the transportation disadvantaged component of the bill and not the toll road portion. Commissioner Mann suggested wording that is clear on the separation. Chair Denham asked for a vote.

There were no objections, and the motion passed.

Agenda Item #12 - FDOT Report

Mr. Michael Tisch with FDOT gave the FDOT report. He said there was news related to the SR 82 project and introduced Mr. Zachary Burch, also with FDOT, to explain. Mr. Burch said that Sunday night the right turn lanes will be opened at the intersections which should help ease congestion. He said the overall project is still on track for completion this summer. He said there should be additional information available at the next meeting. Mr. Nandam offered his condolences for the loss of Commissioner Larry Kiker. He also mentioned the update of the Florida Transportation Plan is currently underway.

Agenda Item #13 – Announcements

Mr. Gogoi announced that FDOT's Safety Office would like to conduct a roundtable meeting in our area on the High Visibility Grant program. He noted that if municipalities would like to apply for funds, they would need to submit an application. He said he reached out to each of the municipalities, their staff, and their law enforcement agencies to attend this meeting. Deputy Mayor Peter O'Flinn noted there were two deaths recently on Bonita Beach Road and thanked MPO staff for their involvement in addressing this issue. Councilmember Johnny Streets Jr. made a request for Mr. Gogoi to send the information to the City of Fort Myers so that they could act immediately. Chair Denham asked if the municipality applies directly to FDOT. Mr. Gogoi said the application needs to originate from the municipality's law enforcement agency.

Deputy Mayor O'Flinn offered his condolences for and appreciation of Commissioner Larry Kiker.

Agenda Item #14 - Information and Distribution Items

There were no information and distribution items.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

^Roll Call Vote *Action Items *May Require Action

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Calandra Barraco with the Lee County MPO at 239-330-2243 or by email at cbarraco@leempo.com at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. If you are hearing or speech impaired call (800) 955-8770 Voice / (800) 955-8771 TDD. The MPO's planning process is conducted in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes. Any person or beneficiary who believes they have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or familial status may file a complaint with the Lee County MPO Title VI Coordinator, Calandra Barraco, at 239-330-2243, or in writing at P.O. Box 150045, Cape Coral, Florida 33915-0045.